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employed in the narrow sense of members of the ruling body, while *communitas* was often applied to the commons. In many boroughs the mass of the householders continued to retain certain rights in common lands long after the oligarchy had secured supreme power, and in some places the commons strove to regain the participation in town government of which they or their ancestors had been deprived; but there is no evidence that the commons were a quasi-corporate body possessing a common seal and a large measure of peculiar privileges, or that the term *communitas* was applied to them exclusively.

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The Talcott Papers. Correspondence and Documents (chiefly official) during Joseph Talcott's Governorship of the Colony of Connecticut, 1724-41. Edited by MARY KINGSBURY TALCOTT. Vol. I, 1724-36; Vol. II, 1736-41. Published by the Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, 1893-94. — 800 pp.

The correspondence of a colonial governor is not usually of sufficient legal or economic consequence to call for extended notice in this review. The collections of state historical societies so often treat of local — even of family — matters, of so much more interest to genealogists and antiquarians than to historians and economists, that they have not been much used by the scientific student. The volumes before me, however, are of a different character; they contain a series of colonial papers relating to New England from 1724 to 1741, covering the official correspondence of the colony of Connecticut, not only with officers and individuals within its own borders, with governors and prominent merchants in New York, Massachusetts Bay and Rhode Island, but also with the colonial agents in London, the board of trade, the commissioners of customs, the privy council, *etc.* In addition the editor, with admirable purpose, has inserted wherever possible copies of other documents necessary for completeness. These are to be found in large numbers in the appendices. The collection becomes, therefore, a valuable body of state papers, which throw light upon an obscure period of our colonial history, and bring to knowledge issues and controversies too little appreciated by students and readers.

The period concerned was neither picturesque nor politically exciting, yet it was a period of important changes in economic environment and economic ideas. The issues dealt with in the

Talcott Papers were not local; questions of law, trade, commerce and finance were undergoing discussion and the vital problem of the relation of the colonies to the home government was in process of solution. The discussion in the *Talcott Papers* relates to Connecticut, but in the mind of the home authority all the proprietary and charter governments were classed together. The attempts to vacate Connecticut's charter were a part of that larger struggle, which lasted from 1701 to 1740, to bring all the colonies into an equal dependence on the crown. For a history of this struggle one will look in vain in any of the histories of the colonies, yet it occupied at the time a position of prominence and it had consequences out of all proportion to the present neglect of it. For an understanding of this struggle, so far as it related to Connecticut, the *Talcott Papers* may be studied to advantage. They discuss important legal and constitutional points involved in the controversy; they show the economic conditions of the colony, the importance of its charter, the relations with surrounding colonies; they give indications of the opinion of the board of trade, of the crown lawyers, of the privy council, of Parliament itself. The student who will examine these two volumes in the light of general colonial history and of English constitutional history of the eighteenth century will find himself richly repaid. In the domain of law, economics and finance there are papers of very considerable importance. These cover a variety of questions, such as the principles governing land settlement in a new country; the growth of manufactures; the encouragement of naval stores; the extension of admiralty jurisdiction; emission of bills of credit; values of colonial money; maintenance of the Acts of Navigation; importation of negroes; duties of naval officers; the right of appeal; the interpretation of the charter, *etc.* The value of the evidence lies not in the mere facts given, which are important in their way, nor in the absolute accuracy or economic soundness of the arguments brought forward, but in the insight given into the changing ideas of the colonists, the influence of economic forces and the colonial attitude toward English law.

Some of the documents have been printed before, as for example, Governor Talcott's letter to the Bishop of London (I, p. 64), but such reprints are rare. One matter is worthy of a few words of caution. Two of the documents, the Petition of the Agents of the Colony to the King (I, p. 187) and the Memorial of Winthrop (I, Appendix) are printed from copies sent to the colony by the agents in London. In each of these cases there are noteworthy variations

from the original sent to the committee of the council, a copy of which was transmitted by the council to the board of trade. In the case of the Petition the difference is remarkable. The colony's copy reads: "that you would be pleased to give leave that a Bill may be brought into this present Parliament of Great Britain to confirm," *etc.* (I, p. 190). The copy that was actually sent to the king reads: "your Majesty to be pleased by your own Order in Council to confirm," *etc.* (B. T. Papers. Proprieties R. 108). Any student of constitutional history will appreciate the fundamental nature of the variation. In the case of the Memorial there is one considerable addition, one considerable omission and an important rectification of what appears to be a copyist's error. (On p. 394, line 29, for "by-laws" read "no laws.") I would not lay too great stress upon these differences, but it shows that in matters of controversy with the home government the copies of papers sent to the colonies cannot always be relied upon. Such papers should be collated with the originals whenever possible, for the latter were the versions according to which the home authorities acted.

The index is good, but might be better. Of the papers mentioned above, the letter of Talcott to the Bishop of London is not indexed at all, and Belcher's Petition will be looked for in vain under "Belcher," "Dummer" or "Petition"; it is found, however, under "Entestate Estate Law." The reference to Cadwalader Colden should be 247ⁿ, not 249ⁿ.

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Massachusetts: Its Historians and Its History. By CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS. Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1893. — 110 pp.

Mr. Adams assumes the underlying principle of all historical development to be the same—the "emancipation of man from superstition and caste." The emancipation from caste, through the struggle for equality before the law, is purely a product of the last four centuries; religious toleration is a revival, the world having "struggled painfully back to where it was when Paul preached on Mars Hill." The inquiry with which this little book concerns itself is: What part has Massachusetts played in this drama of development? Has it been to her credit? Has she consistently maintained it through the shifting scenes, and how have her historians interpreted her actions?